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New York

President:	Mr. Holbrooke	(United States of America)
Members:	Argentina	Mr. Listre
	Bangladesh	Mr. Chowdhury
	Canada	Mr. Fowler
	China	Mr. Shen Guofang
	France	Mr. Dejammet
	Jamaica	Miss Durrant
	Malaysia	Mr. Hasmy
	Mali	Mr. Ouane
	Namibia	Mr. Andjaba
	Netherlands	Mr. van Walsum
	Russian Federation	Mr. Lavrov
	Tunisia	Mr. Ben Mustapha
	Ukraine	Mr. Yel'chenko
	United Kingdom of Great Britain and Northern Ireland	Sir Jeremy Greenstock

Agenda

The situation in Burundi

00-24817 (E)

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The meeting was called to order at 10.40 a.m.

Adoption of the agenda

The agenda was adopted.

The situation in Burundi

The President: In accordance with the understanding reached in the Council's prior consultations, and in the absence of any objection, I shall take it that the Security Council agrees to extend an invitation under rule 39 of its provisional rules of procedure to the Facilitator of the Burundi peace process, Mr. Nelson Mandela.

There being no objection, it is so decided.

I invite Mr. Mandela to take a seat at the Council table.

I would note for the members of the Security Council and for the audience that President Mandela will need to depart this meeting at approximately 11.45 a.m. At that point, we will have a brief suspension and then resume the debate.

The Security Council will now begin its consideration of the item on its agenda. The Council is meeting in accordance with the understanding reached in its prior consultations.

It is now my great honour to call on my friend, our colleague and our associate, the Secretary-General of the United Nations, Mr. Kofi Annan, to begin today's discussion.

The Secretary-General: Once again I congratulate you, Mr. President, on your success in using your presidency to focus world attention on Africa and its problems, and I join you in welcoming President Mandela to the Council Chamber. His presence with us today is a credit both to him and to you, Mr. President. It shows the dedication and seriousness which he brings to his new task as Facilitator of the peace efforts in Burundi, and it also shows how much he values the assistance the Council can give him as he undertakes that formidable task. By coming here he pays all of us a compliment and puts us under a strong obligation to show ourselves worthy of his faith.

Mr. President, you have done well to make the conflict in Burundi the subject of this open meeting. Of all the many crises and conflicts confronting Africa today, perhaps none is more urgent. Certainly in no other country is it so easy to imagine a repetition of what we have all sworn must never be repeated: ethnic killing on a genocidal scale. Again we see two ethnic groups locked in apparently implacable hostility to one another, a steadily escalating spiral of violence and killing and a faltering peace process in which the different parties pay lip service at best.

Some progress has been achieved in the four commissions in Arusha and through consultations in Dar-es-Salaam. We all remember with gratitude the efforts made by the late Mwalimu Julius Nyerere to push the process forward. Yet serious disagreements remain on some key issues — such as the future composition of the army, the electoral system and the transition period — while others — such as guarantees for the minority community and the question of reconciliation versus impunity — have yet to be seriously addressed.

Also, we are all acutely aware of the unstable and volatile regional context in which this drama is taking place. We shall no doubt discuss that dimension in more detail next week when the Council considers the conflict in the Democratic Republic of the Congo. But we cannot ignore it when discussing Burundi, which is not only affected by events in neighbouring countries but also has the potential to further destabilize the region, especially if violence continues to escalate, prompting more of the population to flee across the borders.

For all those reasons, I heartily welcome the involvement of President Mandela and place great hopes in his ability to revive the peace process. We in the United Nations Secretariat are determined to give whatever help we can, and I am sure the Council will wish to do the same. The appalling humanitarian consequences of the present political stalemate would in themselves provide sufficient reason to do so.

Hundreds of thousands of Burundians have died over the past 10 years. The number of Burundian refugees has now reached 500,000 and is growing by the day. More than 800,000 people, 12 per cent of the country's population, are internally displaced, many of them as a result of a deliberate Government policy of forcibly relocating civilians in circumstances where this cannot be justified under international humanitarian law. Since September alone, over 300,000 innocent men, women and children in the region surrounding Bujumbura have been herded into camps where they are deprived not only

of their freedom, but of the most elementary means of subsistence.

The humanitarian impact of this policy has been disastrous. As the World Food Programme reported this week, thousands are now in special feeding programmes, and more are entering every day. But many sites are inaccessible by vehicle, which makes the delivery of assistance very difficult. We are on the verge of another humanitarian catastrophe, for which the world will undoubtedly hold the Government of Burundi responsible. I fully endorse the statement on this subject that was issued today by the Inter-Agency Standing Committee.

Two days ago, the Government of Burundi announced its intention to set up a parliamentary commission to investigate the health conditions prevailing in the camps and to start dismantling those in the province of Bujumbura Rural within two weeks. I welcome this announcement, but urge the authorities to go further and abandon this inhumane and illegal policy altogether. So long as the camps exist, the Government must allow independent humanitarian agencies full access to them and must at all times ensure the safety of humanitarian workers, both international and local.

No party in Burundi should assume that the justice of its cause or the iniquity of its opponents is as obvious to the rest of the world as they may seem to itself. And certainly, no party should assume that outsiders will come to rescue it from the consequences of its own folly and intransigence. One side may think itself entitled to the world's sympathy because it represents an ethnic minority, the same ethnic group which has been the victim of genocide in Rwanda. The other may equally plausibly see itself as the victim, right now, of oppressive minority rule. But neither can escape its share of responsibility for the escalating violence or for the lack of progress towards a political solution.

As a fellow African, I can only echo Mr. Mandela's words to the parties in Arusha on Sunday. Their willingness to sacrifice the lives of their fellow citizens on the altar of their political ambitions amounts to a betrayal of millions of other Africans who are struggling to promote the continent's recovery. It is a grievous obstacle to those of us who are trying to engage the sympathy and support of the rest of the world on their behalf. I strongly urge all parties to cooperate with him in seeking a political solution. If they do, I remain hopeful that, this time, the international community will assist them.

This help cannot be confined to the diplomatic sphere; it must also have an economic dimension. While humanitarian aid has continued to flow to Burundi — and the United Nations Development Programme, in particular, has mobilized $6 million in a trust fund to address the needs of local communities affected by the crisis — other forms of international support have been interrupted since mid-1996.

But once donors are convinced that there is a serious effort by the Burundian parties to find a political compromise, they too should be prepared to make an effort. Burundians will need generous help to reverse the effects of seven years of conflict and to begin at last to address their country's most basic development needs. With that help, they could lay the foundations of a tolerant, democratic political order, in which all ethnic and social groups can find their place. And that, in turn, would be a major contribution to peace and security throughout the region.

To place such hopes in the generosity and enlightened self-interest of donors may seem naive in the light of past experience, but your success, Sir, in focusing attention on this Council's work in Africa emboldens me to expect that, where Africans really do show a willingness to tackle their own problems, more fortunate countries, led by your own, will indeed be willing to help. Meanwhile, I know the Council is impatient to hear from Mr. Mandela, so let me not delay him any longer.

The President: Let me explain for the people who are attending today how we will proceed. We will hear a discussion by President Mandela of what he has done and what he plans to do. There will be other speakers; every member here has asked to speak. The first speaker after President Mandela will be the Ambassador of Mali. At the end of the session, we will adopt a Security Council resolution. That will take place before lunch today.

It is now my great honour to call on the Facilitator of the Burundi peace process, Mr. Nelson Mandela. I just want to make a brief comment on behalf of all of us.

For almost everyone in this room — certainly, for myself — Mr. Mandela was a large figure in our lives before we even knew what he looked like, as we had not been able to see photographs of him for so many years. When he emerged from prison, in one of the great moments for all of us who were able to see it, and we

realized that he was going to take his place on the world stage in a new and historic role — a role of historic proportions — it meant even more to us.

I am confident that history will rank him alongside Gandhi and Martin Luther King, Jr., as one of the seminal figures of our century — as perhaps our leading moral authority. What he did for his country alone would justify his unique role; but he is also a symbol to so many people around the world. Mr. Gusmão in East Timor has talked about Mr. Mandela as his inspiration; Ibrahim Rugova in Pristina, Kosovo, has talked about it; and I know that is true all over the world.

Upon his retirement, which he so richly deserves to spend in peace with his new wife and his children and grandchildren, he described himself to my wife and me last month as just another pensioner. Well, some pensioner! He has accepted one of the world's most difficult jobs, while retaining an active interest in other issues around the world.

We welcome him today in his first appearance before the United Nations Security Council. Our goal is simple: to hear Mr. Mandela's report and, to echo the words of our Secretary-General, to learn from him how we may assist him. The Security Council is unanimous in appreciating that he has undertaken this immensely difficult task.

It is now my great honour to ask Mr. Mandela to address some remarks to the Security Council and to the world.

Mr. Mandela: We are both honoured and saddened by this occasion: honoured that the leaders of the Great Lakes region found it fit to call upon us to step into the shoes of that great son of Africa and the world, Mwalimu Julius Nyerere, to continue the facilitation of the Burundi peace process and that we may now in that capacity address the Security Council of our world body; saddened that the world, and in this case our beloved continent of Africa, continues to be haunted by such a self-inflicted human tragedy as that in Burundi and that there is the need for the facilitation and process upon which we shall report to the Security Council this morning.

We cannot commence speaking of this process without first paying homage to Mwalimu Nyerere. We are inspired by the energy, patience and wisdom he invested in the peace process over several years. We are humbled by the stature of the man whom we are asked to succeed and heavily under the impression of the obligation that places upon us.

We need to thank the United Nations for convening this special meeting of the Security Council to apply its mind to and remain seized of the matter concerning Burundi. Where even one single human being, one group of people, one nation or one part of the world labours under preventable suffering, it is the concern of all of us as a world drawn closer together than ever before in our history.

The misery of the Burundian people affects us all and diminishes the humanity of all of us. The international community turns its attention and its energy to this matter not as a favour to that country or continent. The failure of those responsible to provide conditions of security and social development to the people of Burundi does not represent some errant occurrence on the periphery. It hits at the heart of our common human obligation to make of this century one where all human beings will at last share in the security and prosperity that our planet is capable of providing.

In spite of the grave difficulties we still face in Burundi — issues to which I shall return in the course of this report — it is gratifying to be able to state that a lot of progress has already been made since the start of the negotiations. In the past 18 months the Arusha process has seen the establishment of four committees, each targeting particular aspects of the negotiations. These committees have achieved significant progress, and two of them — the one dealing with the nature of the conflict and the issue of genocide and the other dealing with reconstruction and development — have nearly completed their work. The major outstanding issues for those two committees are, respectively, the appropriate mechanism for dealing with the past; and agreement on the question of the recovery of property by returning refugees. Also, the question of amnesty remains as particularly problematic and complex given the history of Burundi; by the same token, it is one of the crucial matters to be tackled if permanent peace is to be established.

The other two committees are those dealing with, on the one hand, democracy and good governance and, on the other, peace and security for all. These committees too have made significant progress but continue to confront some major issues on which the Burundians must agree. Most of the parties are agreed on the principle of universal franchise, but differences remain

on whether the parliament should be balanced in ethnic, gender or other terms.

The real challenge facing Burundi, and hence facing the facilitation, is that of creating a form of democracy that provides for accountable and responsive government and that ensures security for those who for reasons of demography feel vulnerable within such a system.

With regard to peace and security for all, the parties have agreed on principles for the organization of the defence and security forces, and on the missions of the army, the police and the intelligence services. So far, however, they have failed to agree on a programme of reform of the present security forces or on the issue of the integration of armed groups into the security forces. These are amongst the most sensitive issues in the negotiations and will have to be faced squarely if the process is to lead to a durable peace in Burundi.

We paid a visit to Arusha on Sunday, 16 January 2000, to acquaint ourselves with the facilitation team, the international agencies and representatives involved in the process and, most important, the heads of delegations from the Burundian political parties and role-players. We came away from that meeting impressed by the potential and quality of leadership present in Burundi. We met and interacted with people of outstanding intelligence and education.

There are political processes and sets of dynamics under way which, if harnessed and directed onto constructive routes, could form the basis for a lasting political settlement in that hitherto troubled country. But it is time for Burundians to get down to business. No one can reach an agreement on their behalf. The responsibility rests squarely with their leaders now to find the necessary arrangements by which Burundians can live together.

As one becomes acquainted with the history of the negotiations and the nature of the conflict in Burundi, it becomes evident that Burundians have much more in common with each other than that which divides them. What divides them is their unfortunate history and the perceptions that are the legacy of that history. As it is perceptions of differences that divide, it is also perceptions properly adjusted that can serve as the foundation for uniting Burundi as a nation. To that task the leadership of Burundi now stands called.

One of the most important issues impacting upon the Burundian situation and the negotiation process is that of violence. When the negotiations started in June 1998 it was hoped that they would take place in an atmosphere free from violence and bloodshed. Unfortunately, this has not been the case. Indeed, over the past year, and in the last few months in particular, there has been an intensification of violence, including attacks on the civilian population.

Killings, whether ethnically targeted or indiscriminate ambushes on civilians, the burning of houses and the forcible removal of people from their homes have become all too common occurrences in Burundian life. The population of Burundi has become hostage to violence from all sides in the conflict. As a result, new waves of refugees are fleeing the country, and people are increasingly becoming internally displaced in their own country.

Burundians face the task of demilitarizing their society in the medium term and of embarking on the formidable task of development and reconstruction. An end to the senseless violence through which various forces in Burundi seek to assert themselves is a first step in that longer-term process. In this regard we shall seek to send a clear message to the Burundi Government that in spite of the manner in which they came to power, they and, through them, the Burundi army have a particular responsibility to defend and protect the civilian population, and not just a given part of it.

We regard it similarly as of crucial importance to issue a clear call to those armed groups that are not in the process. We shall make renewed efforts to engage those groups with the purpose of making them aware of the nature of the exchanges in the process and to gather some indication of their attitudes towards the shape of a possible consensus.

We have no doubt that the Burundian peace talks represent the only way in which Burundi can achieve peace and embark on the task of reconstruction and development. For this process to be successful, it must be inclusive, and to the extent that players are not represented at Arusha, we shall regard it as our task to make the process as inclusive as possible.

We shall continue to emphasize to the parties already at the negotiating table that there is no alternative to meaningful engagement within the political mainstream of the process. To those outside the process, the message will be sent to start formulating their political aspirations in coherent terms and to demonstrate the capability to

come to the negotiating table in good faith and in full respect of the guiding principles of the process.

There is also the need for a stronger link between the peace process and the reality of political life in Burundi. Common sense tells us that if an agreement signed in Arusha were not acceptable to public opinion in Burundi, it could not be successfully implemented. The responsibility for ensuring that link lies solely with the leadership of the parties conducting the negotiations. This means that the political leaders need to do groundwork at the grass-roots level in order to persuade their constituencies that the price of agreement and lasting peace will be concession and compromise on certain major issues. To this end, among others, we have already indicated to the Burundian political leaders that we are willing to accept their invitation to visit Burundi as part of our facilitation task.

The Burundian peace process needs the support of the international community to sustain the actual negotiations and the ongoing efforts to achieve peace. At the same time, we must express our deep appreciation for the support it has already received up until now. A further investment in the process can only help finally achieve those objectives to which the international community has already given so generously. The international community can also help alleviate the suffering of the Burundian people through the provision of humanitarian aid, insofar as security conditions allow. In that regard, we appeal to all the belligerents to respect the international humanitarian efforts in Burundi and, in particular, to safeguard the security of those involved in humanitarian assistance.

We commend the efforts of the United Nations agencies to resume fully their activities in the field. We would, however, like to restate that the primary responsibility for ending the humanitarian crisis in Burundi lies with the leaders of the Burundi people. It is they who, by an effort of politics, must create the conditions enabling their people to return to their homes and resume normal economic life. We intend to follow up our recent first visit to Arusha with a more extended one in February, by which time much more work will have been done at the committee level and in other consultative processes.

We particularly wish to invite to that meeting other heads of State from different parts of the world. Apart from providing financial and humanitarian assistance, the international community has a part to play politically. The effectiveness of the messages we have delivered to the various protagonists in Burundi can only be reinforced by the participation of other heads of State and countries. The problems of Burundi are the concern of all of us, as are the problems in any other part of the world.

We are under no illusions about the political problems we face in Burundi or about the utmost fragility of the security situation in that country. Neither can we underestimate the impact of regional developments in the Great Lakes region on developments in Burundi. We conclude, however, by restating our confidence that there is sufficient capacity among the leaders of Burundi to reach compromises and agreements that can at last lead to peace and stability in that country. If Burundians can reach an agreement on a way to live together, they will be setting an example to neighbouring countries, to Africa and to the world.

It is not possible to establish regional peace unless the component parts of a region establish domestic foundations for a stable democratic order. Peace in Burundi will give hope for the Democratic Republic of Congo and other countries in the region, and it will prove an effective example of African intervention in an African problem.

We thank our world body and the international community for their attention to this matter.

The President: I thank Mr. Mandela for his important message. I hope the whole world is listening.

Mr. Ouane (Mali) (*spoke in French*): In addressing the Security Council this morning, I am aware of what a privilege and great honour it is for me and for the Republic of Mali to express our views on the situation in Burundi. But what more can be said after the enlightening statement of the Secretary-General and the great and inspired statement of President Mandela? I shall therefore confine myself to making just a few observations.

First of all, I should like to say how grateful my delegation is to you, Mr. President, for having organized this important meeting. I should also like to welcome the presence with us today of President Nelson Mandela, and I should like to thank him for his important statement. I should also like to thank the Secretary-General for his statement.

The situation in Burundi is certainly a difficult one. Violence and insecurity are continuing, as reflected in resumed attacks against the civilian population and

against humanitarian organizations by armed groups, particularly around Bujumbura.

Moreover, the humanitarian situation is catastrophic. Right here, just a few days ago, Mrs. Ogata, the United Nations High Commissioner for Refugees, gave us an overwhelming account of the large number of Burundi refugees and displaced persons fleeing constant fighting between rebel groups and Government forces. How can we fail to mention the human rights violations that accompany these renewed tensions? Mali is concerned by this situation.

However, there are some encouraging prospects for a settlement of the crisis in Burundi. They are based, as we have just seen, on the following steps: first of all, the reactivation of the Arusha peace process, seen as the most viable basis for a settlement of the conflict, along with efforts still being made to set up an internal political partnership in Burundi; secondly, the designation of President Nelson Mandela as Facilitator of the Arusha peace process by the Eighth Arusha Regional Summit; thirdly, the coordination of the implementation of the Lusaka process and the reactivation of the Arusha process; and lastly, the commitment of the international community to provide assistance for reconciliation, reconstruction and democratization.

The draft resolution that we will adopt at this meeting is to be seen precisely from this standpoint, and that is why my delegation fully supports it.

In conclusion, I would like to fulfil a duty of conscience and my brotherhood. The duty of conscience is to pay tribute to the memory of Mwalimu Julius Nyerere and express appreciation for the valuable contribution he made to peace and national reconciliation in Burundi. The duty of brotherhood is to renew to President Nelson Mandela the constant, total and resolute support of the Republic of Mali for his work, particularly in facing this new challenge that the Council is considering today.

The President: I thank the Ambassador of Mali for being so concise. I remind everyone that we agreed yesterday that all speakers would try to limit themselves to about four minutes so that President Mandela could hear as many comments as possible before being required to leave.

Mr. Ben Mustapha (Tunisia) (*spoke in Arabic*): I would like to thank Secretary-General Kofi Annan for his valuable statement, in which he presented his evaluation of the situation in Burundi and the means to deal with it. At the outset, let me say that we feel very fortunate to have President Nelson Mandela present among us. I wish to salute him most warmly and, on behalf of Tunisia, to express our appreciation for accepting the task of Facilitator in the Arusha peace process for Burundi. He thus follows another African leader whose struggle for independence and freedom and valuable contribution to the peace process in Burundi will go down in history.

We have full confidence, in President Mandela because of his eminent stature in the world and his well-known struggle and commitment to African issues. We share the great respect that African leaders and peoples have for him. The active role that he has undertaken at the regional and continental level offers the best chance for continuing the Arusha peace process and pushing it towards success. This gives us reason for optimism. We express our support and encouragement for his efforts, and we thank him for his valuable statement this morning. We call upon all parties in Burundi to cooperate with him and facilitate his task. We also call upon the international community, including the more powerful countries, to lend him support in the peace process.

I will limit my remarks to the following points concerning the Arusha peace process. First, experience has shown that the stalemate in negotiations will lead some parties towards violence and extreme positions. The Arusha process is entering a new and decisive stage, and the option of negotiation becomes the best choice for bringing peace and security to Burundi. Therefore, we once again express our encouragement to President Mandela to find the ways and means suitable to facilitate the Arusha talks, in consultation with the concerned parties.

One of the most urgent priorities is to halt the acts of violence and killing and to engage in negotiations, because the fighting and violence in Burundi have led to humanitarian tragedies, an increase in the number of refugees and displaced persons, a deterioration of living conditions and a waste of its economic potential. Providing humanitarian and economic assistance to the people of Burundi would alleviate their suffering and promote the peace process.

All parties in Burundi have to prove to President Mandela and the international community that a political solution through collective participation in the Arusha process is what they need. This should be serious participation leading to achieving the goals set for this process. We hope that the talks will end as soon as

possible and will lead to a peace agreement accepted by all parties.

Secondly, what do we expect from this agreement? We hope that it will lay the groundwork for the transitional period leading to a gradual reform of the State institutions within a framework of national reconciliation, forgiveness and wider participation in political life. We believe that this will not happen overnight, as President Mandela has just said, because this difficult process requires time and the building of mutual confidence between the parties. This is very important, as political will and an actual commitment to implement what is agreed upon.

Thirdly, the role of the international community in general, and of the United Nations in particular, is important in providing material support and encouragement for this process until it finally succeeds, and then in following it up so that the Burundian people can harvest the fruits of peace.

We hope that the political confidence of the parties has increased with President Mandela's assumption of his task and the suitability of the situation for pushing the process forward. However, at the same time, we believe that the Burundian question is not a simple one; it is related to the situation in the Great Lakes region as a whole. This requires us to think about dealing with the problems of the region in a wider context.

I would like to conclude by saying that the draft resolution before the Council today is a clear message to all the concerned parties to work seriously to bring an end to the conflict in Burundi. We support its adoption.

The President: I thank the Ambassador of Tunisia for his kind words.

Mr. Fowler (Canada): The Canadian intervention this morning in this historic debate will be made by Mr. Joseph Caron, who is our Assistant Deputy Minister responsible for Africa and Asia.

Mr. Caron (Canada): Canada warmly welcomes the nomination of Nelson Mandela as the new Facilitator of the Arusha peace process. We strongly support his efforts to achieve a negotiated political and peaceful solution to the conflict in Burundi. We are pleased to hear that Mr. Mandela successfully launched his work in Arusha just a few days ago.

Canada has contributed $1.25 million to this process and wishes to reiterate that the renewed Arusha peace process is the most viable means of achieving a durable peace and for the resumption of a long-term sustainable development in Burundi.

Canada also welcomes the appointment of Berhanu Dinka as United Nations Special Representative for the Great Lakes region as a sign of growing United Nations engagement in the area. We hope that Ambassador Dinka will be successful in his work to increase the international community's efforts to address the deteriorating situation in Burundi.

We strongly condemn the continued violence against the civilian population perpetrated by all the parties, in particular the massacres in rural Bujumbura in December and in the province of Rutana earlier this month, as well as attacks on humanitarian workers. The Council must urge all parties to the conflict in Burundi to cease these attacks and must insist that all perpetrators of human rights and humanitarian law violations be held accountable for their actions.

Canada urges the Council to call on all parties to the conflict to ensure that safe and unhindered access to affected populations is given; to guarantee fully the safety, security and freedom of personnel, including locally engaged staff; and to ensure that refugees are protected, respected and enabled to return voluntarily and in safety to their homes.

Canada has condemned in the past, and continues to do so, the policy of forced displacement of the population into regroupment camps where access by humanitarian personnel is restricted. We are encouraged by the comments made by the Secretary-General this morning indicating that there may be some movement on this important issue. We believe very strongly that these camps are a violation of the human rights of Burundians. Canada calls for the dismantling of the camps and, in the meantime, for full and unconditional access to these camps by humanitarian workers and human rights observers.

In conclusion, Canada believes that the people of Burundi, and indeed all of those who care about peace and stability in that unfortunate country, are immensely fortunate that the peace process is facilitated by a man of such political wisdom, experience, stature and humanity as Madiba Mandela.

Mr. Listre (Argentina) (*spoke in Spanish*): We welcome the convening of this open briefing on the situation in Burundi and in particular the presence of President Nelson Mandela.

The analysis that President Mandela has shared with us and the excellent briefing by the Secretary-General have enabled us to better understand the deep-rooted causes of the conflict in Burundi and the vital commitments that are necessary to reach a peaceful, negotiated and participatory solution. We believe that this solution should reflect the reasonable aspirations of the majority while fully safeguarding the legitimate rights and interests of the minority.

The first step towards reconciliation is an immediate ceasefire and the cessation of all attacks on the civilian population by armed groups. These indiscriminate attacks deserve our strongest condemnation. Moreover, we are deeply concerned about the policy of forced regroupment of more than 340,000 persons ordered by the Government of Burundi. We believe that this policy contravenes recognized principles of international humanitarian law and must cease. In this context, and bearing in mind the difficult living conditions in the aforementioned camps, we call on the Government of Burundi to give full access to humanitarian personnel and human rights monitors.

There can be no doubt that the internal partnership between the Government and the National Assembly as well as the Arusha process are forums for negotiation and dialogue that must be maintained and enhanced. Otherwise, the political arena will be taken over by extremists, and the forces of moderation, Hutu and Tutsi alike, the very ones who worked to launch the peace process, will, regrettably, be marginalized. With regard to the Arusha process in particular, we believe that in order to be effective it must reflect the realities on the ground and be open to the participation of all groups and sectors, with no exclusions or self-exclusions. We also trust that all of the parties will heed, in good faith, with an open mind and a sense of compromise, the advice and proposals provided by President Mandela on the basis of more than 30 years of tireless struggle for freedom, human dignity and the rule of law in Africa.

We believe that the economic and social situation in Burundi is not unrelated to the growing climate of tension in that country. The data on malnutrition, infant mortality, basic services and health care speak for themselves. Despite the lifting of regional economic sanctions in February last, Burundi has not regained the market share it lost as a result of the economic embargo, and the people are not receiving their "peace dividend". That is why we call upon the donor States to consider resuming development assistance, to the extent that security conditions permit. We believe that making conditions for economic assistance more flexible will strengthen the Arusha process.

Another cause for concern is the security and freedom of movement of United Nations and associated personnel operating in Burundi. We call on all the parties to the conflict to respect their status. In this context, we reiterate our condemnation of the assassination of United Nations Children's Fund and World Food Programme personnel which took place in Rutana on 12 October 1999. This crime cannot go unpunished. Its perpetrators must be tried and punished in accordance with the law.

We believe that the question of Burundi is inextricably linked to the regional context. Peace and stability in Burundi will be strengthened through the consolidation of the rule of law in all countries of the Great Lakes region. We do not believe that the problems afflicting the Great Lakes region are exclusively political or security-related. For that reason, we would like to support France's proposal to convene, when conditions are favourable, a general conference on the Great Lakes region under the joint auspices of the Organization of African Unity and the United Nations.

Mr. Dejammet (France) (*spoke in French*): Like all of the members here, I too am very aware of the honour done us today by the presence of President Mandela and of the Secretary-General, and I welcome the very moving and eloquent tribute that you paid, on behalf of the Council, to President Mandela.

Our words are neither pro forma nor dictated simply by the present situation. The conflict in Burundi was unending; there was no hope in sight. But everything can change, and in this case everything began to change with the arrival of President Mandela, thanks to his prestige, moral authority and dynamism, and above all to his noble spirit and his tireless dedication to democracy and national reconciliation — because national reconciliation is indeed the key to resolving the situation in Burundi.

That is why we fully support the efforts being made by Mr. Mandela along the lines of those made by President Nyerere. We appreciate in particular President Mandela's intention to have the armed groups involved in the inter-Burundian peace talks, something that is indeed

essential. It is to be hoped that the inclusion in the negotiations of all the Burundi parties will enable the cessation of hostilities as quickly as possible. We also welcome President Mandela's stated desire to go to Burundi in order to ensure that all the people of Burundi are kept well informed about the peace process.

Through the European Union, France is making its contribution to the financing of the Arusha peace process, and we are prepared to extend our assistance to the negotiations.

We deplore the resumption in Burundi of violence and the violations of human rights that go along with it. We condemn the attacks by armed groups on civilians and on the personnel of humanitarian organizations. We are disturbed by the forced regroupment of civilians. We note that in the Great Lakes region several countries have had, and are having, recourse to the practice of forced regroupment to cope with security problems. We deplore that practice in all the countries of the region where it is applied, and we call for it to be halted immediately.

We take note of the announcement by the Government of Burundi that it will proceed to "gradually dismantle the protection sites". We urge the Government to implement that commitment and to ensure access to humanitarian assistance in the meantime.

The resumption and continuation of the Arusha peace process should be supported by the international community in a very concrete way. The economic distress in the region aggravates tension. The vicious cycle must be broken, and therefore all assistance efforts must be mobilized to facilitate economic reconstruction and democracy.

Finally, as everyone else who has spoken so far has said, the Council must bear in mind the links that exist with the situation in the Democratic Republic of the Congo, which has seriously affected the situation in Burundi. Implementation of the Lusaka Agreement to resolve the conflict in the Democratic Republic of the Congo is essential to bring about the full recovery of Burundi. The Arusha and Lusaka processes must mutually support each other. It is difficult to conceive of a lasting peace if that peace is not all-inclusive, does not take into account the interactions that may exist among the various countries of the region and does not lead, as the Ambassador of Argentina has said, to the holding of an international peace conference on the Great Lakes region.

The President: I know that President Mandela needs to leave, but he has said that he would like to stay for a couple of more speeches, at least. I thank President Mandela. We know how unbelievably tight his time is.

Mr. Shen Guofang (China) (*spoke in Chinese*): First of all, my delegation wishes to express its warm welcome to the newly nominated Facilitator of the Arusha peace process, President Mandela. We would like to thank the President of the Council for having arranged for this meeting today to give us an opportunity to exchange views with President Mandela and to explore together ways to settle the conflict in Burundi. We would also like to thank Secretary-General Kofi Annan for the important briefing he gave.

China strongly supports the facilitating efforts of President Mandela. We believe that with his outstanding wisdom and experience, he will instill new vitality into the peace process in Burundi. The recently concluded meeting at Arusha serves as proof in this regard. We believe that many views and proposals put forward by President Mandela merit study and attention by the Council. At the same time, we also believe that the realization of peace and reconciliation in Burundi depend ultimately on the people of Burundi and the leaders of the various factions. As President Mandela pointed out, no one else can take their place in the achievement of peace.

Achieving a political settlement through negotiations is the only way to end the internal conflict and bring about reconciliation in Burundi. Military means can only render futile any achievement made so far in the peace process and will once again plunge the people of Burundi into the abyss of war. We therefore appeal to the relevant factions in Burundi to proceed on the basis of the fundamental interests of the people of Burundi, immediately cease hostilities and participate fully in the peace process so that an agreement may be reached as soon as possible. We fully agree with President Mandela that the leaders of the various factions in Burundi have the responsibility in this regard.

The severe economic situation is the main cause of the turbulent situation in Burundi. Without a fundamental and thorough elimination of poverty, it will be hard to achieve and maintain peace and stability in Burundi. We therefore appeal to the international community and to the donor community to intensify economic assistance to Burundi. As always, my Government will continue to provide assistance to the peace process in various aspects.

We would like to emphasize that peace and stability in Burundi are inseparable from peace and stability in the Great Lakes region as a whole. The conflict and confrontations among countries in the region are often interrelated and mutually affect one another. The international community must commit itself to fundamentally resolve the conflict in the entire Great Lakes region. We support the proposal to hold an international conference on the Great Lakes region, and we believe that the Security Council and the entire United Nations should take practical measures to promote the convening of such a conference and that we should give it the support it needs, including financial and human resources.

Finally, my delegation believes that the draft resolution that is to be adopted will demonstrate the Council's support for the Arusha peace process and move that process forward.

The President: I will now call on the representative of the United Kingdom, after which we will have a very short suspension so that the Secretary-General and I may escort President Mandela out of the Chamber. We will then resume as rapidly as we can. I know that we are all very sorry that we could not have all the speeches while President Mandela was here, but that was unavoidable given the pressures this morning.

Sir Jeremy Greenstock (United Kingdom): I have to admit to Madiba President Mandela that the Security Council has been scratching its head on the issue of Burundi. We did not seem to be getting very far last year — last month. The Government of Burundi was, frankly, not listening to the international community. It was not putting the people of Burundi first.

I think that President Mandela's appointment is a very important turning point in this particular crisis, and perhaps for the hopes for regional peace in that part of Africa. His willingness immediately to see all the groups involved in this conflict and to encourage inter-party dialogue both inside and outside the framework of the talks will, I think, encourage a sense of ownership in the final agreement on a political solution by all Burundi and increase the chance of a successful implementation.

Let me comment briefly on two aspects: the humanitarian and the political.

The Secretary-General has just said to us, in a very important analysis of the situation, that we are now on the verge of another humanitarian catastrophe. It may be, as the Secretary-General has said, that we would blame the Government of Burundi for such a catastrophe, but the international community cannot afford that after Rwanda, after Srebrenica and after other things that we have not got right.

We have to insist with all the parties to the conflict that the human rights of the people of Burundi have to be respected, that humanitarian law has to be abided by and that there has to be access for the humanitarian agencies of the United Nations and non-governmental organizations to the people of Burundi who are suffering.

The draft resolution that we are about to adopt, and which the United Kingdom supports, does not, in the end, mention the *regroupement* camps, but my Government, like the Secretary-General, condemns those camps. They are not the right process for the handling of the humanitarian situation. We do hope that President Mandela will use his influence to make sure that those affected by the humanitarian crisis be allowed to return to their homes and that there be unhindered access to them as well for the humanitarian agencies.

On the political process, the Secretary-General referred to the principal areas of disagreement between the parties. We have not really discussed them this morning, but they are bound to take up President Mandela's attention: the composition of the army, the electoral process and, perhaps most difficult, how to make the transition work from the present situation to a situation that is stable and acceptable to the international community.

Madiba Mandela has confirmed that the process has failed so far on reform of the security forces and on the integration of armed groups into the regular security forces' set-up. Mr. Mandela has indicated that these difficulties can really be dealt with only by a change of perception on the ground. I think this, above all, is what we are looking to him for. He said that political leaders need to do their groundwork at the grass-roots level and look for compromises on the major political issues. How are they going to be encouraged to do that?

I think that Mr. Mandela's appointment, and indeed the public attention which this meeting of the Security Council has brought to this issue, must above all create a momentum for such a change of perceptions and for the strengthening of the link between the Arusha political process and the political facts of life in Burundi. Time is not on Burundi's side and I think now is the opportunity

for all the people of Burundi to rise to the challenge of resolving their differences.

Mr. Mandela said that regional peace needs all the component parts to be stable. Well, we must get Burundi right not just for the people of Burundi, but also for the continuing search for stability and security in the region and in the continent.

The President: I should now like to call for a brief suspension of the meeting while the Secretary-General escorts President Mandela out of the Chamber. We will resume in about three or four minutes. I hope all participants and observers will stay, because we still wish to hear from the Ambassadors of Jamaica, Namibia, Ukraine, Malaysia, Russia, Bangladesh and the Netherlands.

The meeting was suspended at 11.50 a.m. and resumed at noon.

The President: President Mandela has asked me again to convey his deep regret that he could not stay for the entire meeting; I have promised him that we will provide him with the texts of the remaining statements.

I should like to inform the Council that I have received a letter from the representative of Burundi, in which he requests to be invited to participate in the discussion of the item on the Council's agenda. In conformity with the usual practice, I propose, with the consent of the Council, to invite that representative to participate in the discussion, without the right to vote, in accordance with the relevant provisions of the Charter and rule 37 of the Council's provisional rules of procedure.

There being no objection, it is so decided.

At the invitation of the President, Mr. Ntahomvukiye (Burundi) took a seat at the Council table.

Miss Durrant (Jamaica): My delegation wishes to thank you, Sir, for having convened this meeting on Burundi as part of the Council's focus on Africa under your presidency. We also wish to thank the Secretary-General for his important introductory statement.

I wish to take this opportunity to express Jamaica's appreciation to former President Mandela for his decision to take on the onerous task of Facilitator for the Arusha peace process. We wish to thank him for his insightful analysis, in which he emphasized the reasons why the situation in Burundi must be of concern to us all. At the same time, I would be remiss if I did not pay tribute to the late Mwalimu Julius Nyerere for the tremendous efforts he made to bring peace to Burundi.

As the draft resolution on which the Council will take action at this meeting reflects the sentiments of my delegation, I wish simply to highlight some points. First, this meeting sends a positive signal from the Security Council of our support for former President Mandela and of our willingness to embrace his initiatives to move the Arusha peace process forward. As we have heard from him, there have been some positive developments which could lay the groundwork for a peaceful solution. Secondly, it recognizes the important role in Burundi of the Secretary-General, his representatives for the Great Lakes region and the United Nations in general. Thirdly, it stresses the importance of national dialogue leading to national reconciliation, and emphasizes the need for the immediate cessation of hostilities.

Against that background, my delegation welcomes the internal consultations which have already begun in earnest. We support President Mandela's determination that the process should be made as inclusive as possible, and we are pleased to learn of his offer to visit Burundi.

The reports of renewed violence, including attacks on civilians, must compel us to act decisively and quickly in resolving the conflict. We must emphasize that there can be no viable military solution. We therefore urge all parties to work towards a peaceful settlement.

The appalling humanitarian situation prevailing in Burundi must be the focus of immediate attention. Only last week, the Council was reminded by the United Nations High Commissioner for Refugees of the plight of refugees and internally displaced persons in the Great Lakes region, largely fuelled by the ongoing conflicts in Burundi, Rwanda and the Democratic Republic of the Congo. And, as the Secretary-General reminded us, some 500,000 persons from Burundi have been affected in this manner.

In this regard, the international community owes a debt of gratitude to the Governments of the region, particularly that of the United Republic of Tanzania, which have had to bear the socio-economic burden of hosting refugees from the conflict in Burundi.

The status and protection of humanitarian workers in conflict situations must be given equal attention. It

must be made clear to all parties that it is in their interest that humanitarian assistance reaches vulnerable civilians, particularly women and children, who are the real victims of the conflict.

We are deeply concerned about the recent murders of members of the staffs of the United Nations Children's Fund and of the World Food Programme, and we urge that the perpetrators be speedily brought to justice.

Due recognition must be given to the fact that the crisis in Burundi is deeply intertwined with the general situation in the Great Lakes region. My delegation believes that what is really needed is a strategy that will address the crisis in the Great Lakes region in a comprehensive and holistic manner. We hope that the upcoming plenary meeting of heads of State or Government within the framework of the Arusha peace talks will yield positive results.

My delegation is keenly aware that, for a durable peace to take hold, it is essential that the root causes of insecurity be addressed. We therefore support the call for the long-term economic needs of Burundi and its neighbours to be tackled with the support of the international community, as a part of the peace process.

Finally, it is our sincere hope that, under the inspired and wise leadership of President Mandela, the parties to the conflict will demonstrate their commitment to bring peace, security and democracy to the people of Burundi.

Mr. Andjaba (Namibia): I wish to thank President Mandela for his briefing on his vision for the Arusha peace process. We warmly welcome his appointment as Facilitator of the Arusha peace process. We have no doubt that, under his guidance and able leadership, the negotiations will reach a successful conclusion acceptable to all Burundians.

I also wish to thank the Secretary-General for his briefing and update on the situation in Burundi. We support his continuous efforts in Burundi and in the region as a whole.

The situation in Burundi is at a crucial juncture, with violence against civilians being perpetrated by all sides to the conflict. The policy of forced *regroupement* is not the answer to the violence that afflicts the country. Rather, it brings further division among the population, escalates the cycle of violence and exacerbates the already dire humanitarian situation in Burundi. My delegation condemns the inhuman policy of *regroupement*. It is in this light that we reiterate our call on the Burundian authorities to cease the policy of *regroupement* and create conditions conducive to the safe return of civilians to their homes to resume their livelihood.

The Arusha peace process is the best viable option for finding lasting peace in Burundi. In addition, the participation of all Burundian parties in the Arusha peace process is of paramount importance, and we therefore urge them to cease hostilities and to participate constructively in the negotiations so as to end the carnage in that country. Only the people of Burundi, with the assistance of the international community, can bring true and lasting peace to that war-torn country. We therefore call for continued assistance to the peace process.

President Mandela has taken over from another gallant and respected son of Africa, the late Mwalimu Julius Nyerere, one who played a pivotal role in the liberation struggle in Africa, particularly in southern Africa. Who better than President Mandela can help reinvigorate the Burundi peace process? He is familiar with the tragic politics of exclusion because he comes from a country where in the past the majority were trampled upon by the minority regime, and from a background where exclusion rather than inclusion was the order of the day. Last but not least, President Mandela comes from a background where ethnic division was used by the minority regime to sustain themselves in power. But even more importantly, President Mandela hails from a country with a leadership that has proved that it is possible for people who were in the past divided along racial and ethnic lines to accommodate and accept one another and live together in peace and harmony.

In conclusion, I would like to reiterate our support for the efforts of President Mandela, a distinguished son of Africa, and to wish him success.

Mr. Yel'chenko (Ukraine): My delegation is delighted to see at the Council table one of the most prominent statesmen of our epoch, Mr. Nelson Mandela. Ukraine warmly welcomes his appointment as the new Facilitator of the Arusha peace process. We would like to congratulate Mr. Mandela on the energetic start to his efforts during the meeting in Arusha on 16 January 2000.

We share your assessment, Mr. President, that the current situation in Burundi remains critical and requires urgent action on the part of the international community. We praise your initiative in organizing this meeting to

provide important impetus to mobilizing such international action. The outspoken support of the Security Council for the recent invigoration of the Arusha process is a vivid manifestation of its commitment to peace in Burundi and in the entire region. We would also like to encourage the Secretary-General to pursue his efforts in enhancing the role of the United Nations in Burundi. Providing urgent relief assistance to those in need in Burundi is yet another major task at this particular juncture. We are calling for all Burundian parties to ensure safe and unhindered access for humanitarian assistance and to guarantee the safety and security of humanitarian staff in the territory of the country.

At the same time, my Government maintains that the primary responsibility for the success of the peace process in Burundi lies with the Burundian people themselves. In this connection, we have been encouraged by the responsible stance of those Burundian parties that have chosen to negotiate their differences. Ukraine joins the appeal to all other parties in Burundi to cease hostilities and commit themselves to a political dialogue. The draft resolution before us today is a clear message to them.

Mr. Hasmy (Malaysia): My delegation is pleased to have joined Council members in welcoming President Mandela and is grateful for his important and inspiring statement. For the sake of brevity, I will simply associate myself fully with the welcoming remarks made by you, Mr. President, the Secretary-General and other Council members who spoke before me. We also join in the warm words of tribute expressed to the late President Julius Nyerere of Tanzania.

Malaysia strongly supports the Arusha peace process and the efforts to build an internal political partnership in Burundi. We commend the initiatives of regional leaders in the peace process. We hold the view that no party should be excluded from the talks and that all cooperation must now be extended to the new Facilitator. Regardless of their positions, parties still outside the peace process must not use their non-participation as an excuse not to agree to cease hostilities.

My delegation is seriously concerned about the dire humanitarian situation in Burundi, which affects hundreds of thousands of innocent civilians who are caught in the middle. Attacks by armed groups on the civilian population must be strongly condemned, and every effort should be made to prevent such occurrences. We note the explanation given by the Government of Burundi that the regrouping of the population was not forced and was a response to real concerns for their safety and well-being. We earnestly hope that such measures are only temporary in nature and will be terminated as soon as possible so that the people can return to their homes in safety. In the meantime, United Nations and humanitarian personnel should be given immediate, full, safe and unhindered access to these camps in order to ascertain the situation at hand so as to avoid further hardships and prevent the loss of lives. It is imperative that these personnel be afforded security guarantees, including freedom of movement.

Given the large numbers of refugees and internally displaced persons, a situation attested to by Mrs. Ogata during her briefing of the Council last week, we call on the international community, notably the donor countries and international humanitarian relief agencies, to continue with their generous assistance, while commending them for the contribution they have already made in alleviating the plight of these hapless civilians. We are concerned that further human displacement will have serious ramifications for peace and security throughout the Great Lakes region.

As we focus on progress on the political front, we should not, however, lose sight of the dire economic, humanitarian and social conditions in Burundi. Earlier expectations of improvements in the economy, following the suspension of the regional economic embargo on Burundi, have failed to materialize, mainly because of the continuing violence and insecurity, resulting in large-scale poverty, malnutrition and disease among the Burundian people. The situation demands the infusion of substantial economic and development assistance to Burundi.

The situation in Burundi should not be seen in isolation from the continued instability in the region as a whole. The linkage with the situation in the Democratic Republic of the Congo is all too clear. The situation in Burundi impacts on the region and vice versa. Peace in Burundi is not likely to last in the absence of overall regional stability.

The responsibility for ending the conflict lies, ultimately, with the Burundian people themselves, particularly their leaders. A genuine political commitment is required on the part of the leaders to work on the gains made thus far. We urge them most strongly to give forthright and unqualified support to President Mandela and to assist him in his difficult task. The parties must seize the opportunity and negotiate in good faith and seek to rebuild a united nation under a constitution that enjoys

the widest possible support. In the search for a final political settlement, it must, first and foremost, be acceptable to, and meet the needs of, the people of Burundi themselves.

In expressing our strong support for President Mandela, we wish him every success in his efforts. We are particularly grateful to him for agreeing to spend his valuable time in retirement undertaking this difficult assignment for the sake of peace in Africa and peace in the world.

Finally, I would like to commend you, Mr. President, for highlighting this and other important African issues.

The President: I thank the representative of Malaysia for the kind words he addressed to me.

Mr. van Walsum (Netherlands): We have very little to add to what has been said by delegations that spoke before us. We are concerned at the ongoing violence in Burundi. We warmly welcome the designation of Nelson Mandela as the new Facilitator of the Arusha peace process. We do not consider the involuntary resettlement or regroupment of rural populations an acceptable way to address the security situation in Burundi, but we do believe that Burundi has the right to be safeguarded from cross-border attacks by armed insurgents.

The Netherlands has supported the Arusha peace process in the past. As an expression of our continuing support, we have decided to contribute another $250,000. Following a rather gloomy year — as far as progress in the peace process is concerned — this decision was greatly facilitated by the appointment of Mr. Mandela as the new Facilitator.

My delegation has the greatest confidence in Mr. Mandela. As the first democratically elected President of South Africa, he personifies everything that is new in Africa. As such, he seems more qualified than anyone else to convince the Burundian delegations when he invites them, as he did in Arusha, to join the modern world.

In conclusion, I join the representatives of Argentina and Jamaica in calling on the Government of Burundi to take effective action in identifying, apprehending and bringing to justice the perpetrators of the murders of United Nations personnel in Rutana last October.

Mr. Chowdhury (Bangladesh): It is a matter of great honour for me to join colleagues in paying tribute to President Mandela. A man of peace and a symbol of wisdom and forbearance, his presence in the Security Council bears a special significance for all of us. In him, the world has found the most fitting successor of Mwalimu Julius Nyerere to facilitate the peace process in Burundi. We feel this will inspire peace in the whole of the Great Lakes region.

We subscribe to the points made by the Secretary-General, clearly, about the situation in Burundi and responsibilities of the parties concerned. Bangladesh extends unequivocal support to the Arusha peace process and to the mandate and mission of the Facilitator. We endorse fully the outlines for peace in Burundi elaborated by President Mandela in his statement. We believe that an agreement providing for a just, peaceful and durable solution to the conflict in Burundi is both expedient and possible.

The presence of the Foreign Minister of Burundi at this meeting of the Council is important; it will afford us a first-hand briefing on the Government's position on the situation in Burundi. I believe he will in turn carry the message from this Council back home.

We urge the parties involved in the process to persevere in their commitment to negotiate a settlement. We call upon those still remaining outside to commit themselves to the peace process. This task should now commence in full earnest where it stopped last October with the passing away of Mwalimu Nyerere. We welcome the spirit of peaceful settlement demonstrated in the 16 January meeting in Arusha, launching the initiative of President Mandela.

For the negotiations to be successful, the Government of Burundi will be required to demonstrate its sincere commitment and win the confidence of all parties and sections of the people of Burundi. These would be expressed in terms of respect for international humanitarian law, as well as fundamental freedoms, civil liberties and human rights of all citizens. The Government will in particular have to ensure full and unhindered access for all humanitarian personnel so that assistance can reach those in need. The human rights observers should also receive unhindered and unrestricted access. The international community will judge the situation on these parameters as well.

At the last meeting of the Council on this subject, views were expressed in favour of the need for contingency preparations by the United Nations in anticipation of the implementation of the outcome — a Burundi peace agreement. We support the idea, given the magnitude of the humanitarian, rehabilitation and reconstruction needs of the country.

The tragedy of Burundi lies fundamentally in its socio-economic situation. It is there that the United Nations should be ready to respond once the situation is ready for full-scale involvement. To be effective, our response should be timely and adequate.

It is in the spirit of reiterating our collective commitment to lasting peace in Burundi that Bangladesh has collaborated with our colleagues in the Council in submitting the draft resolution for consensus adoption.

Let me conclude, Mr. President, by thanking you wholeheartedly for organizing this important meeting.

The President: I thank the representative of Bangladesh for his kind words and his important contribution.

Mr. Lavrov (Russian Federation) (*spoke in Russian*): We will join our colleagues who have spoken about President Nelson Mandela.

Russia welcomes the designation of President Mandela as the international Facilitator in the Burundi peace talks. We hope that this will help us to get beyond the standstill in the political process. We would urge all Burundi parties to cooperate closely with the international Facilitator, with a view to a swift and positive conclusion of the process for a peaceful settlement of the conflict.

Russia has consistently advocated solving the internal conflict in Burundi through negotiations involving all parties involved in it. We would call on all the Burundian parties to refrain from acts of force, which could torpedo the results that were achieved with such difficulty during the Arusha process. We strongly condemn attacks by armed groups on Bujumbura and other populated areas, which cause civilian deaths. We also express our concern over the continuing practice of forced displacement of civilians into camps under military guard.

The tense situation requires measures to stimulate negotiations involving all political forces in that country. We confirm our view that the principal responsibility for peace in Burundi lies with the Burundians themselves, and we call for an intensification of efforts to achieve this goal within Burundi itself and also within the international, and particularly the subregional, context.

From this standpoint, Russia will support strengthening interaction between the Security Council and the regional participants in the peace process. In this endeavour, we will be guided by the assessments and views of President Mandela, who, given his status and his prestige, is indeed a key player in the talks.

The President: I want to thank all Council members for their support of today's meeting and of previous meetings and, of course, for their excellent support of President Mandela. A special thanks goes to Secretary-General Kofi Annan for his leadership today and his participation in this entire meeting.

I shall now make a brief statement in my capacity as representative of the United States.

The United States is deeply concerned about this human tragedy. President Mandela's eloquent and forceful statement reflects the urgency of the crisis. Burundi may be a small country, but the ramifications of the current crisis are enormous. The solution we seek in Burundi is what we seek for all the conflicts in Africa — and we will discuss the Congo next week — a peace not based on military stalemate, not on ethnic division or hatred, but a peace based on national reconciliation.

The late President Nyerere, one of Africa's greatest statesmen, made great progress in the Arusha process. Now, with the leadership of President Mandela, we have an opportunity to revitalize that effort. We support President Mandela's call to pursue an inclusive peace process. In order for peace to be lasting and just, the negotiations must address the concerns of all parties.

The United States must again condemn the policy of forced regroupment and is concerned about the conditions of the so-called regroupment camps in the vicinity of Bujumbura and elsewhere. I would associate myself in that regard with the strong and eloquent remarks made by several people here, notably Ambassador Greenstock of the United Kingdom. Today some 350,000 Burundians are forced to live in these makeshift camps, in appalling conditions. We understand the complexities of the conflict, or we hope we are trying to understand them, and we have heard the justification for regroupment. But

this complexity does not absolve the Government from its basic responsibility under international law.

We urge the Government of Burundi to take the steps necessary to alleviate this untenable situation. It must permit humanitarian workers to have immediate, full and unconditional access to regroupment camps. It must adhere to the United Nations Guiding Principles on Internal Displacement.

In this context, we welcome the statement made yesterday by the Government of Burundi that it would review the policy and begin dismantling a portion of the camps. But this is not enough, although it is an important step in the right direction.

We also condemn the attacks on innocent civilians, who have been victimized by all the armed belligerents. This culture of impunity must come to an end. Those who have committed crimes against innocents must be brought to justice.

Finally, and no less urgently, as reflected in this morning's meeting, the international community must support the Arusha process. Today's resolution will be an important start. But we must build on our work here, and our Government is prepared to do its part. I would like to announce that, in consultation with the Congress — seven of whose members are here today with me, two of whom are sitting directly behind me as I speak: Congressman Meeks and Congressman Ackerman — the United States is prepared to provide an additional $500,000 to facilitate the peace process. But I must be frank: no solution to the Burundi crisis will be easy. While the most vital ingredient is the will and effort of the parties, no agreement will last without sustained international effort. Therefore, let us do everything we can to assist President Mandela as he moves forward.

I now resume my functions as President of the Council.

I now call on the Minister of External Relations and Cooperation of Burundi, His Excellency The Honourable Séverin Ntahomvukiye. We welcome his statement and will pay it close attention, and we thank him for his patience in listening to the previous speakers.

Mr. Ntahomvukiye (Burundi) (*spoke in French*): The Government of Burundi welcomes this special meeting of the Security Council and hopes that it that in its wake there will be even greater understanding on the part of the international community of the actual situation, resulting in increased determination on its part to help Burundi to emerge from the security and socio-economic crisis that has been disrupting it since 1993.

I have the honour to speak before the Council in order to present my Government's views on security, the peace process and the economy.

Speaking first on security, compared to the years 1995 and 1996, when virtually the entire territory was engulfed by civil war, the situation in general has significantly improved. Overall the situation is under control, and one can say that no national catastrophe in terms of widespread massacres is really imminent at this point. Only four provinces out of 17 still suffer from a lack of security.

With respect to Rural Bujumbura — one of those four provinces — the Government had to take special security measures establishing sites, known as regroupment camps, for the protection of the people. The underlying grounds for that decision were explained in detail in a statement made public on 13 November 1999.

Clearly, Rural Bujumbura had become the focus of an undertaking aimed at overwhelming the security forces and destabilizing the capital through indiscriminate terrorism, which would have led to what could be termed the "Somalia-ization of the country", with a resurgence of militias and various uncontrolled self-defence organizations throughout the entire national territory. This is fact, not fiction. In that same region, genocide already occurred when national security forces lost control of the situation, giving the upper hand to militias and leading to chronic vendettas.

The Government categorically rejects allegations that regroupment camps are part of an "ethnic cleansing" system or that they involve human rights violations. That is pure anti-Government propaganda and disinformation. There is no selectivity in that province; it has the same mixture of Hutu and Tutsi as the others.

The only goal of those operations was to ensure security. We had to avert a national threat and to prevent people from being caught in the vice grip of confrontations between the army and the rebels, which were using them as cannon fodder and human shields. Unfortunately, this is the price of State security when the entire nation is at risk.

Currently the Government is taking stock of the security situation in Rural Bujumbura three months after the regroupment operation began. We can now inform the Security Council that we will be able to close about 10 of the 50 camps within two weeks. They will be dismantled in a fully transparent way, in the presence of national and international monitors.

I would like to reiterate once again that regroupment is not an end in itself. Absolutely all of the camps will be gradually dismantled as satisfactory security conditions are restored. For the national security reasons mentioned earlier, the camps around the capital will be the last to be closed, that is to say, after we have completely done away with any threat of destabilization.

Meanwhile, the Government, with the invaluable assistance of humanitarian organizations, is making every effort to provide health care, food and shelter to the regrouped persons. People are increasingly able to resume their usual farming, trading, educational and professional activities. We would reiterate that all camps are accessible and open to all monitors and humanitarian personnel, enabling them to carry out their work there. No restrictions are imposed, contrary to certain untrue information that has been disseminated, and protection is provided on request.

It is true that overall, living conditions in the camps are harsh. The real and definitive solution is to stop the war. This has been the Government's position since the inception of the Arusha process, but the rebels also have to made to understand this. The international and regional communities must become involved, for the rebellion is not only internal; it has taken root in neighbouring and even distant countries as far away as southern Africa, where, supposedly, the militarist option is once again gaining support in certain countries. There the Government of Burundi is powerless. All countries, without exception, must struggle against the logic of war. Military victory, from wherever it might come, will not bring lasting peace to Burundi.

With regard to the Arusha peace process, my Government welcomes the appointment of President Mandela as the new mediator. We assure him of our honest, willing, accountable and resolute cooperation in this process, which must be reconfigured to ensure inclusive participation by all the parties to the conflict so that an appropriate pace and working method can be established in order to bring about a swift and positive conclusion.

The situation is extremely urgent. We have confidence in the new mediator's abilities in this area, and his prestige is such that he can rally all Burundians around our true national interests and help bring Burundi back into the mainstream of international solidarity. We call on the entire international community to provide him with unwavering support.

I have already had occasion to express my Government's concern with regard to the socio-economic situation. The needlessly prolonged and extreme economic pressure on my country due to the embargo on international cooperation threatens to lead to an explosion. That explosion would be not only at the level of society, but also at that of security. The peace process in which the people of Burundi and the international community have placed their hopes runs the risk of collapsing.

The link between peace and development is now more necessary than ever before. Burundi calls on its partners to review and correct their analysis of this situation and to resume cooperation immediately. We see no valid reason for not resuming such cooperation; even reasons of insecurity are not well founded, given that three fourths of the country is secure. Even less well founded is the wait-and-see approach regularly taken with respect to the peace Agreement and to meaningful progress in the negotiations, any assessment of which is far from being precise.

I am making a veritable cry for help. Strikes began on Monday, 17 January, this year. Looking at it closely, it is clear that they are due not only to the increasing unavailability of the minimum means of subsistence, but, more seriously, to the political manipulation of our poor citizens by extremists and those who are against the peace process — and they indeed exist. By continuing to impoverish the population in this way, the international community will only serve to vindicate those people. They are close to achieving their aim of bringing about an indefinite halt to the peace process by instilling in the people of Burundi a sense of distrust and disbelief in the Government, the regional community and the international community.

The President: Members of the Council have before them document S/2000/29, which contains the text of a draft resolution prepared in the course of the Council's prior consultations.

It is my understanding that the Security Council is ready to proceed to the vote on the draft resolution before it. If I hear no objection, I shall put the draft resolution to the vote now.

There being no objection, it is so decided.

A vote was taken by show of hands.

In favour:

Argentina, Bangladesh, Canada, China, France, Jamaica, Malaysia, Mali, Namibia, Netherlands, Russian Federation, Tunisia, Ukraine, United Kingdom of Great Britain and Northern Ireland, United States of America

The President: There were 15 votes in favour. The draft resolution has been adopted unanimously as resolution 1286 (2000).

I invite the Secretary-General to make some closing remarks on this remarkable meeting.

The Secretary-General: I would, very briefly, like to thank you, Mr. President, and the members of the Council for having focused attention on this very important issue, and for having invited President Mandela, as Facilitator, to join us in our work.

I think we have demonstrated to the Facilitator and to the people of Burundi and their leaders that we are prepared to work with them on the peace process, and that if they work honestly and sincerely with President Mandela to push the process forward, the Council and the entire United Nations will be there to work alongside them. I think they owe it to the people of Burundi, to the region and to Africa. I hope that when next we meet we will have considerable progress to report.

The meeting rose at 12.45 p.m.